AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the "Reference to Related Application" paragraph beginning on page 1, line 14 as follows:

Priority to the filing date of ~~U. S. provisional~~ U.S. patent no. 6,707,381 ~~application serial number 60/300,698~~ filed on June 26, 2001 is hereby claimed.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 4 as follows:

This problem has been addressed somewhat in key tracking systems such as that disclosed in U. S. Patent No. ~~6,262,664of~~ 6,262,664 of the present inventor. In this system, keys are attached to their key tags with serialized tethers which, if cut, inform the system electronically of the breach. While this is an improvement in the tracking system, there still remains the possibility of removal of the key by cutting the physical key off of its tether, because this action would not alter the serial tether. In such a case, the only method of recognizing the theft is a physical inventory of the keys by a person. Requiring a human inventory in order to confirm that the key or other object being tracked and controlled is present by definition negates the main purpose of automatic key tracking systems. Essentially, the tracking system is reduced to a manual control system. It thus will be seen that as long as an object tracking system actually tracks and controls an attached tag or container and not the tracked objects themselves, dispensing and controlling items such as keys, jewelry, or narcotics is potentially not much better than a controlled honor system.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 15, line 20 as follows:

A portal 18 is disposed on the front face 12 for receiving and dispensing objects to be tracked and includes an opening 19 and a closable security door 21. Of course, a security door may not be needed or required for applications where security containers to be inserted into the system are small, in such cases, the portal is too small for a would-be thief to reach through the portal and security is therefore ensured by the small. In such cases, the portal is too small for a would-be thief to reach through the portal and security is therefore ensured by the small nature of the portal itself. The control computer 13 of the system also is provided with a network connection 23 for communication with other systems or with a central controller in a network of systems or with other computers such as inventory or billing computers. Auxiliary or emergency communications capability is provided in the form of a wireless communications device 24, which may, for example, comprise a wireless local area network (LAN) device, and antenna 26, which are coupled to the control computer. Battery backup 27 is provided to insure operation of the system during power outages and during mobile or stand-alone operation. ~~with~~ With regard to power outages, the control computer is programmed to alert security personnel via the network connection or wireless communications device if the power remains off long enough to threaten the integrity of the battery. In this way, security personnel are notified and advised to provide physical security for the system and/or to correct the power outage. The control computer may communicate with a remotely located central computer 44 either via the network connection 23 or the wireless LAN connection 45. In this way, a number of individual object control systems can be monitored by a central computer and information such as status, inventory, and billing information can be communicated through the network on a periodic basis.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 39, line 24 as follows:

Fig. 9 illustrates another possible embodiment of an object control and tracking system for carrying out the methodology of the present invention. The components and various elements of this embodiment will be described first, followed by discussions of their applications and advantageous uses. Generally speaking, the system 91 in Fig. 9, which, it is understood, is disposed inside a cabinet such as the cabinet shown in Fig. 1, comprises a portal 93 disposed on the front face 92 of the cabinet. The portal opening is keyed at 94 as in the embodiment of Fig. 3 to ~~insure~~ ensure insertion of security containers into the opening in the proper orientation. An outside security door 96 is disposed at the mouth of the portal and is selectively openable and closeable by means of a computer controlled servo motor, represented by gear drive 97, that is coupled to the control computer 95. An inside security door 98 is inwardly spaced ~~form~~ from the outside security door 96 and it too is selectively cpenable and closeable by means of a computer controlled servo motor, represented by gear drive 99. The outside and inside security doors 96 and 98, when closed, define an antechamber 101 sized to contain a security container bearing objects to be tracked by the system.